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Amendments to the Claims

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (previously presented) A method of charging slave devices in an electronic system in a staggered fashion, comprising the following steps:
 - a) establishing an electronic system including a master device and a bus;
 - b) connecting multiple slave devices to said bus; and,
 - c) selectively charging said slave devices with electrical energy supplied by said master device on said bus, wherein said charging of said slave devices is temporally staggered so that selected slave devices begin charging at different times from other slave devices.
2. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein step c) includes the step of said master device issuing individually addressed charge commands to slave devices.
3. (original) The method of claim 2, wherein step c) includes the step of said master device issuing individually addressed charge commands to banks of slave devices.
4. (original) The method of claim 3, wherein said electronic system is an electronic blasting system, said master device is

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a blasting machine, and said slave devices are electronic detonators.

5. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein step c) includes the step of said master device issuing a charge command followed by a clock sequence.
6. (previously presented) The method of claim 5, wherein each of said slave devices has a scratch value and said clock sequence includes a clock value corresponding to the scratch value of each of said slave devices on said electronic system.
7. (original) The method of claim 6, wherein the scratch values of said slave devices are grouped into banks so that said slave devices are charged in banks during step c).
8. (original) The method of claim 5, wherein said clock sequence has a temporal frequency and the time during which slave devices are selectively charged is at least partly a function of said temporal frequency.
9. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the charging in step c) includes a constant-current, rail-voltage limited charging process.
10. (original) The method of claim 9, wherein step c) includes charging said slave devices in banks.

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11. (previously presented) The method of claim 7, wherein said clock sequence has a temporal frequency that is chosen to ensure that each bank of slave devices is charged, at least until the attainment of the rail-voltage, without any other bank of slave devices being simultaneously charged.
12. (original) The method of claim 9, wherein said electronic system is an electronic blasting system, said master device is a blasting machine, and said slave devices are electronic detonators.
13. (withdrawn) An electronic system capable of charging slave devices in a staggered fashion, comprising:
 - a) a bus and a master device configured to supply electrical energy on said bus; and,
 - b) multiple slave devices connected to said bus;wherein said electronic system is configured and/or programmed so that said slave devices are selectively charged with said electrical energy in a temporally staggered fashion so that selected slave devices begin charging at different times from other slave devices.
14. (withdrawn) The electronic system of claim 13, wherein said master device is configured and/or programmed to issue a charge command and a clock sequence.

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15. (withdrawn) The electronic system of claim 14, wherein said clock sequence includes values corresponding to banks of slave devices.
16. (withdrawn) The electronic system of claim 13, wherein said electronic system is an electronic blasting system, said master device is a blasting machine, and said slave devices are electronic detonators.
17. (withdrawn) A slave device for use in an electronic system having a master device, a bus, and multiple slave devices, said slave device being configured and/or programmed to be selectively charged, during staggered charging of said electronic system, such that charging of said slave device begins at a different time from other slave devices.
18. (canceled)
19. (withdrawn) The slave device of claim 17, further configured and/or programmed to selectively charge in response to a charge command followed by a clock sequence.
20. (withdrawn) The slave device of claim 19, wherein said slave device is an electronic detonator, said electronic system is an electronic blasting system, and said master device is a blasting machine.
21. (new) An electronic system for charging slave devices in a staggered fashion, wherein said electronic system is operated according to the method of claim 1.